

484 and we were in country with which there had been practically no contact. It must really have been alarming to the Badawin: a noisy party in lorries, which they had not seen before, and ourselves in cars, shouting directions to each other in the night and firing Verey lights to show each other the way; [486] but the Badawin materialized out of the darkness, most surprisingly without rifles, directed us time and again on our way, and pushed our cars out of the sand.

170 After Thukmein, which we left about half-past eleven, we had no great difficulty in moving on as the moon was up. We drove on for some hours and then stopped to let the rest of the party come up. It was bitterly cold and the keen wind cut through us as we huddled together trying to sleep on the sand, but we did sleep and woke to a marvellous dawn. The sunset of the night before, the brilliant moon, and the sunrise are three enduring memories of that night.

The four flat-topped hills of Al 'Abr lay about 10 miles ahead of us, and although only one of the lorries had come on, the other having had one of its many breakdowns, we decided to go on. It was marvellous hard sand on which a speed of fifty was easy and we had quickly left the lorry behind. We made our way into the wadi bed, myself acting as guide as I was the only one who knew the country even from the air. There were one or two Bureiki Sheikhs about with camels, and rather reluctantly they told us that the 'Abdulla bin 'Aun were also there with the camels. A few minutes' driving up the hard wadi brought us to the ruins of the fort, said by the Al 'Abdulla bin 'Aun to have been built by them.

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[291] The dozen or so Badawin round the well looked extremely surprised when the car drew up. I suppose they were hardly awake, as the morning was still chilly and they were all wearing their sheepskin coats. A few Bureiki Sheikhs came down and bade us welcome. All the rest of the Badawin claimed to belong to every tribe except the 'Abdulla bin 'Aun. Some said they were Sheikhs, some claimed to be Daham, a Yemeni tribe, and some Nahd, but there were a good many shifty looks and in the course of the morning we sorted out nine who had given themselves away and who finally admitted to belonging to this raiding section. There are only forty-three males all told of the 'Abdulla bin 'Aun, but from the amount of trouble they had given in the past it was well worth getting them under control. They have no houses or settled habitation and are about the only people of the Hadhramaut who have goatskin tents. They are part of the Al Hatim, but Bin Mulhi, their chief, says he has no control over them and the Sei'ar themselves were delighted when we took hostages from them and put in a garrison, whose function is to protect the travellers and not to interfere in other ways.

342
744 Presently the lorries came up and I installed the wireless and settled the garrison into temporary quarters. There was nothing at Al 'Abr except the ruined fort of which only one wall still stood, a small stone *murabba'a*, one of the dark cube-shaped shelters used by travellers all over the Hadhramaut, and a hut built of branches of trees and grass of which there was a great profusion. There was also a new *seif's* tomb decorated with ibex horns, and one of the Bureiki Sheikhs took us there and slapping the tomb addressed its lately canonized occupant and introduced us. We put the garrison into the

24: Meulen and Wissmann T-3 (1931) 1932 NMZ Hadhranaut NMZ

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Makalla. The tongue of land with the cemetery.

See page 13.

P. 16 (A)

000 was deeply disappointed. In this land the hurry of Europeans is neither understood nor valued. One has plenty of time oneself, and the Arabian proverb: "Patience and waiting are of the All Merciful, but haste is of Satan", is carried into practice. When Shēkh Elmās poured coals of fire on our heads by insisting that we should take his coat in place of one of our own, which had been torn in pushing the car, we departed with fresh wonder at Arabian hospitality.

It was already dark when we arrived at the frontier of the Makalla territory. The Bedouins were still lying in ambush, waiting for the foe, small fires were burning in their camp among the rocks, and the look-outs were posted close beside the road. We were under the protection of the *Dōla*, and the latter had only to fear attack from the Ḥumūmī.

7. THE LAST DAYS OF WAITING IN MAKALLA.

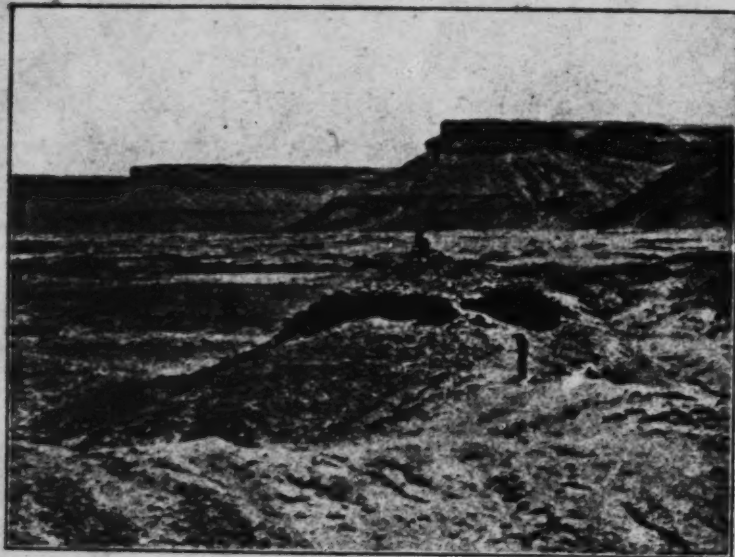
In Makalla it appeared that preparations for our departure were really advancing. Nevertheless we had to have patience for yet another day, as everything must be in good order. The Vizier told us that we should only be able to travel by day, as the ground was too difficult for night-journeys. "He who has not yet seen the mountains of Ḥaḍramaut has not yet learned what *real mountains* are."

So we had one day more in which to enlarge our acquaintance with the town, visit divers officials and, after that, climb the rocks behind the town, to collect plants and insects and to lay the foundation for the map of our itinerary.

764 The Vizier, Sayyid Abū Bakr, lives in the centre of the town, at the base of the tongue of land where, formerly, the Sultan also lived. The promontory turns out to be occupied, for the greater part, by the cemetery, in the centre of which is a fine *qubba* dedicated to Shēkh Ya'qūb, the patron saint of Makalla. The *lthi*¹ trees spoken of by earlier travellers no longer exist, and the cemetery has now no green whatsoever.

171 ¹ *lthi* or *athl* (الثلج), *tamarix nilotica* Ehrenb., cf. L. Hirsch, *op. cit.*, p. 90, 306; G. Schweinfurth, *op. cit.*, p. 172, 174.

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172



The "Graves of the Kings".

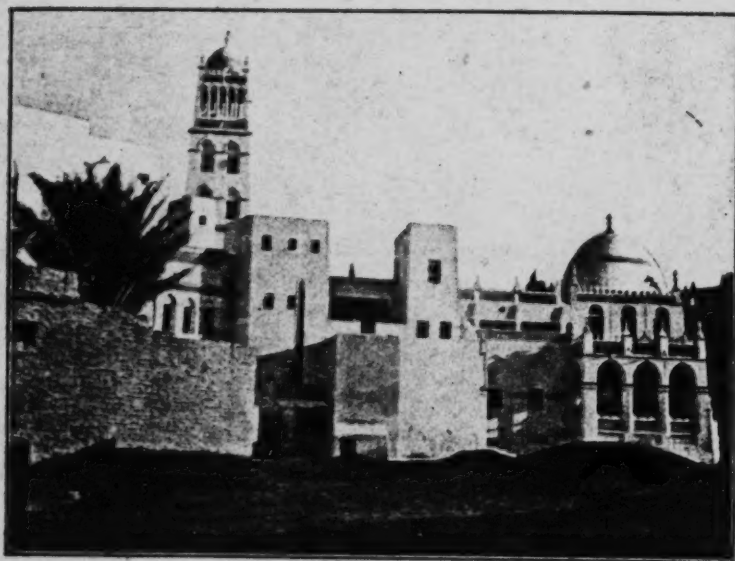
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The el-'Affas house in Hurēda.

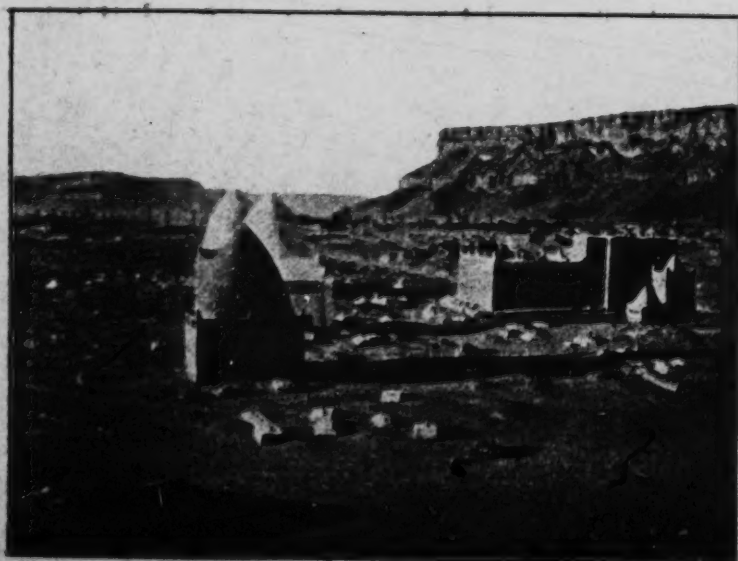
p88 (6)

See pages 86 and 90.



346

The principal mosque of Hurēda.



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38. The cemetery of Hurēda.

p88(c)

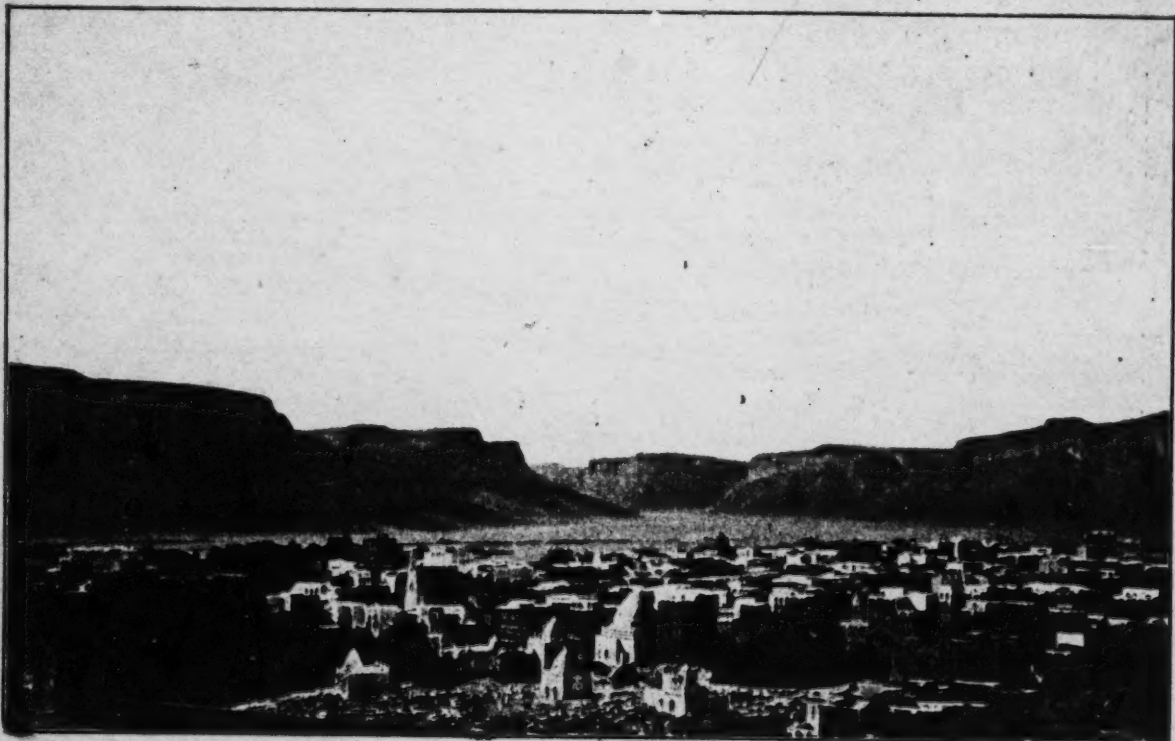
SĒWŪN, THE HEART OF HADRAMAUT PROPER 123

terrace of 'Izz ed-Dīn, with the moon-lit tops of the palm-trees ⁰⁰⁰ all around and the star-lit sky of Arabia above, are unforgettable.

On May 25th the Sultan invites us to a motor drive through the gardens of Sēwūn. The two cars pass slowly between mud walls enclosing gardens; the white summer residences in the midst of palm-trees are hidden from the gaze of the inquisitive. Then, in order to get a good view of beautiful Sēwūn, we were taken as far as the mountain-wall, where we climbed a hill on the slopes of the rock débris. The city, which lies at the foot of the mountain-wall, gleams white and thus gives a prosperous impression. On the highest point stands, wide and ³⁴¹ tall, the palace of the Sultan, one of the best examples of Ḥaḍramī palace architecture that we came across. Only the roof-terraces, with the rooms built upon them, are entirely white. The rest of the buildings has two white bands on a line with the windows, whilst the ventilation openings are framed in white. The corners of the edifice, which is long and rectangular, are fortified by round turrets. The heavy mud walls are thinner above than below and, consequently, the outer walls are not perpendicular, but slope inwards, which strengthens the impression of power and beauty in the building. The palace rises up from walled-in terraces, on which are gatehouses, powder magazines, stables and soldiers' quarters. At a little distance lies the graceful palace, entirely white, but somewhat smaller, of the Sultan of Terīm.

The cemetery is situated nearly in the centre of the town ⁷⁶⁴ and has five graves of *wallis* with graceful *qubbās* in their honour. Several white minarets rise out of the sea of houses ³⁶¹ of the city, reminding us that Sēwūn was once famous as a seat of religion and learning. Schools were habitually connected with the mosques and that is still the case with their scanty remnants. Surrounding the city is a wide border of palm-groves, with the white of summer residences dotting it here and there. Those of the es-Saqqāf family are noticeable for their number and their size.

24: Meulen and Wismann T-3 (1931) 1932 MM2 Hadramaut MM2



Sewün with the cemetery in the foreground.

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p124 (c)

000 before we got our caravan on the move. A disappointment of this kind does not improve the mental atmosphere, especially before one has learnt to know one's followers. Distrust of the honesty of their promise to do all in their power, and the overwhelming desire to go quickly forward on account of the scantiness and bad quality of our food bred in us a mood of tension and exhaustion.

133 The mountain scenery through which we passed became
312 gorgeous. The geological strata were clearly visible in the
712 walls of the dry river-beds through which our path ran.

Before us was a lofty chain of granite mountains like a huge wall with sharp peaks and jagged tops. It grew very warm among those bare rock-walls where we had to climb laboriously over sharp, slippery ground. To one side of the path was a brackish spring of whose water even the animals refused to drink. We mounted towards the high mountain-pass which our people called Hūta. The remains of a strongly fortified wall built of fragments of uncut stone stand in the pass. Heavy fighting took place there ten years ago when • [764] el-Qe'ēfi sent an expedition to conquer Wādī Hadjr. The graves of the slain are marked by simple heaps of stones, on either side of the mountain path. After a long descent we reached the wādī again at just about the hottest time of day. Its banks here are steep and so we could not get at the enticing water or the green *rāk* bushes, but our Bedouins went in search of a place where it would be possible to descend. We had made up our minds to rest for the afternoon, not here in el-Qulēta, but further on at Nēfa. The intense desire to hurry on at all costs and to get to the end made Von Wissmann and me decide foolishly to force matters and, if need be, to walk alone to Nēfa without the caravan. The path wound on through a region of sand-hills and the heat was so great that we became uneasy over our decision. Luckily Dhēb had the magnanimity to give way and gave the order to follow us. Nor had we trusted in vain to Little's map, for Nēfa was close at hand. Near the path was a great